1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

heavy tasks and the close and constant routine of housework, on the other hand, sometimes require more than casual urging by the mother. Biographical evidence agrees with observation on this point, but nevertheless few girls reach puberty without attaining proficiency in the various household tasks. The decline of polygyny has probably hastened the girl's education in the household arts. When there is only one wife in the household, not only must she have more regular help from her daughters, but also it is more likely that the daughters will have to take on full responsibility at those times when the mother is unable for ritual reasons to take part in the preparation of her husband's food.[1] Biographical sources indicate that this tendency was already operating at least fifty or sixty years ago.

Every Ocimbundu assumes that his sustenance will come from cultivation of the soil. The 'professions' which a child may learn are therefore in the nature of side-lines. Although the Ovimbundu are not a true cattle-rearing people, they possess many domestic animals, especially dogs, pigs, sheep, goats, and chickens. Chickens are owned and looked after by both men and women, but the other animals only by the men. Boys may have small stock of their own, and a boy's economic independence most frequently begins with owning a chicken. Herding has been a function of the sister's son and even now there is reluctance on the part of boys to herd for their fathers. Animal husbandry is largely a commercial enterprise, save in the extreme southern tribes of Kalukembe, Ngalangi, &c.

The principal side-line 'professions' (*ovipinduko*) may be listed as follows:

FOR GIRLS

Basket-making, which is practised by all to a limited extent, but excelled in by relatively few.

Pottery-making.

Medical-practice and Divination (for conditions, see *infra*).

FOR BOYS

Mat-making, which includes the making of four distinct types of mats each of which has its specialist; the making of trays and large baskets for granaries.

[1] i.e. at the times of her menstrual periods, after the birth of a child, &c.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP13 Mbundu FP13

463 *Wood-working*, including the following specializations:
462 Doors, windows, and their frames; coffins.
[322] Beds, tables, chairs, &c.
Mortars, pestles, grinding-handles, and handles for various iron implements.
Stools, household utensils, carved images, staves, knobkerries, &c.
Drums and other musical instruments.
Canoes (dug-outs and coracles).
Rope-making, nets, and rudimentary weaving.
Thatching has its specialists although all men can thatch.
Fishing.
Bee-hunting, including the making of hives.
224 *Hunting*.
326 *Iron-smelting and smithing*.
791 *Medical-practice and Divination*.

The last three professions of the list are sacred and are entered under special conditions. They are often passed on by inheritance, but not always. All of them require sacrifice at certain stages, and when the enslavement of a spirit (*oku andeka*) is required, it is socially allowable. This seems to be the case with these offices as with those of the king and his ministers, both because of benefits accruing to the community in their exercise and also because of inherent danger to the individuals who exercise these functions.

177 The advent of European commerce, industry, and government
463 has created a number of types of employment for boys and young men, some of which entail prolonged absence from the village and a loosening or severing of kinship ties. Church and mission have
[797] also offered employment and have opened new opportunities for advance in place and in position.

861 Later childhood, then, is the period of technical training during which it is expected that a large amount of economic responsibility will be assumed. A child begins to own property even before this, and from the beginning of later childhood will be accounted legally responsible for his actions. It is recognized, however, that he should not be set tasks beyond the experience or ability of his age and that the full responsibility of adulthood will only come with marriage.

[538] ***Umālēhē ka tonyōlā ongulu yuvala*;**
A youth does not scrape the pig for the wedding feast;
***pekonjo pa siala* (*ovonya*).**
on the hoof there remain (bristles).

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

dropped off; of ivory there was no more. From 1893 on, says Bastos, rubber was practically the sole export of the District of Benguela and of its hinterland.[1] In 1891 more than one million milreis' worth of rubber was exported from Benguela, sixteen times as much as was exported only five years before, and three and one-half times the value of the *three* leading exports in 1886. Until 1891 this increase was not at the expense of other exports, but rather in addition to them.

All of this rubber, and the other exports as well, came to the coast in caravans of the Ovimbundu or their neighbours. In its inception and its great development it was an enterprise of the Ovimbundu. Everyone who was able to carry a load joined a caravan. It had always been the custom to take boys on trading expeditions, as young as they could go—say, from their tenth year—as a part of their education. Now girls were also taken and hardly any but the women stayed at home to raise the crops and provide rations for the caravans. European residents experienced great difficulty in securing necessary porters,[2] and this was one reason for finally putting through the wagon-road from Benguela to Caconda.[3] It was extended to Viye during the military campaign of 1890. The fever of the rubber trade reached into all the villages of the land and took in everyone able to travel. Mission schools had been established since 1881, but they had but few pupils until 1900. There were also other reasons for this, but a principal one was the attractiveness of the rubber trade.[4] Even the kings found it more difficult to gather armies for their wars: trade had become more attractive than the possibility of plunder.

Of all the kings who ruled the various Umbundu kingdoms during this time, the one who is best remembered is Ekuikui (II) of Bailundu (1876–93). Tradition has begun to ascribe to him and to his reign some things which properly belong to earlier

[1] Bastos, op. cit., p. 34. He does not include *serviçaes* in the exports, since they all went to the mainland or island plantations, but he remarks that at this time the price rose to even 90$000 (p. 33). The rise in price was perhaps due to the smaller supply owing to the preoccupation of the Ovimbundu with the rubber trade.

[2] See *Missionary Herald*, 1889, p. 350.

[3] *Benguella*, 1891, op. cit., p. 10.

[4] The reports of the governor of Benguela, to which reference has been made, also mentioned this fact, saying that although the American missions were intelligently directed, their results were small, since parents would not send their children to learn while they could pick up loads of rubber (1887, p. 19; 1891, p. 20).

2: McCulloch E-4 (1945-51) 1952 FP13 Mbundu FP13

Ovimbundu women braid their hair neatly in strands across their foreheads, and decorate the braids with small blue and white trade beads.(1) 302

MAIN FEATURES OF ECONOMY

AGRICULTURE(2)

Main crops are maize and several kinds of beans. Subsidiary crops include: sorghum, kaffir corn, emmer wheat, manioc, peanuts, squash, sweet potatoes, garden vegetables, a little rice, cotton, sugar-cane and tobacco. Fruit-trees such as the papaya, banana, loquat, tangerine, lemon, peach and apple, are increasingly cultivated, and, to some extent, coffee. Upland fields for the principal crops of maize and beans are cultivated during the rainy season, and, to piece out the harvest, river gardens for secondary crops are used in the dry season. 241

The principal corn-gardens

Traditionally men work with their wives in the heavier labour of clearing new fields, but today the demands of contract labour are such that few are able to help.(3) Before the rains begin in early September, women prepare the fields for planting. If a new plot is to be used, it is first cleared with a small hatchet. Tree stumps are left two or three feet high; after the field has been cultivated for a year or two and the tree-stumps have dried and rotted, they are burned off and cleared away. When the rainy season has set in and the ground is thoroughly wet, the main corn-fields are planted. The ground is dug with a hoe and ridged slightly, the ridges following the contour of the land, so that the rain will not wash away the soil, and so that the moisture will be held. Occasionally irrigation is used, small channels being led from hillside streams to the gardens. Maize is dropped by hand on the ridges, and the seeds covered with the foot. Beans and squash are planted with the corn. In January there is usually a break in the rains, and this is the time when the bean crop ripens. (This is a critical period, since if the dry spell lasts too long the corn crop is blighted, but if it is too short the beans will not ripen.) The vines are pulled up and put in the field hut to dry. Later the beans are beaten out of the pods and stored. 241 [462] [312]

In each field there is a grass hut, which is used as a shelter from showers, as a place for drying beans or corn, and as living quarters when the corn is sprouting. (When a woman decides that it would be more convenient to live by her field, which requires constant guarding against birds, she may live in her field hut with her children for several weeks.) 241 343

As the dry season commences, the corn crop ripens. When it is ripe, it is plucked, dried and shelled, and stored in the *osila*, a granary on posts, for future use. One *osila* is used for each household. When required, the corn is hulled and pounded into the meal which forms the staple food.(4) [251] [252]

(1) Hambly pp.129-32, and illustrations; Childs, personal communication.
(2) Cashman, 1944, pp.72-8; Hambly, (2) 1934, pp.146-8, and Childs, personal communication.
(3) Childs, personal communication.
(4) For a good description of the preparation of corn-meal, see Cashman, pp.77-8.

242 When a field is wearing out, the corn growing shorter and bearing fewer ears to the stalk,(1) the woman makes a final planting of corn, 244 sticking cuttings of manioc between the rows. Most of these cuttings take root and grow. It takes two or three years for the tubers of this plant to mature in an old field, but in some parts of the country where manioc is set in new land it matures within a year. The leaves of the plant are used as a vegetable with corn-meal, and manioc meal is used as a basic substitute when corn is short.

The onaka or river-garden

241 In August a woman plants her *onaka*, near a stream in the alluvial soil, or in some river bed. Here she plants corn which will be ready for eating during the January period of food shortage, as well as cabbage and other vegetables.

Organisation of labour

● [462] Formerly men did the heavier work of clearing new fields, although, as has been noted above, since the introduction of wage labour much of the work is left to the women. Men may also have their own fields, the produce of which is sold to provide ready cash to clothe the family, pay taxes etc. The women's fields are intended to feed the family. Children help their parents in the fields, but also have their own plots. Gardens are made by each household, i.e. by each wife where there are a number of wives. Neighbours often co-operate during the harvesting [476] period, after which beer is supplied by the owner of the field which has been harvested.(2)

HUNTING(3)

796 Most men and boys hunt, and women and children may help in burning 224 the grass and driving the game during the annual communal fire-hunts. [463] But the professional hunter or *ukongo* is a recognised specialist, qualified by specific training and dependent on his knowledge of hunting magic [868] and ritual for his success. A boy becomes a *ukongo* by an apprenticeship of about two years to an older hunter. This period culminates in a ceremony of inauguration, which may be attended by all the villagers but at which only the professional hunters dance. Several *ukongo* provide game, which is cooked for the feast; the dancing commences but the novice remains still and silent until he feels the "spirit of the head"; he then rises and distributes game to the villagers. Blood from the animals killed is sprinkled over his weapons, which have been made by the *ukongo* who has trained him. From now on his daily life is subject to certain ritual prohibitions: he must not sleep with his wife on the night before going on a hunt, special food and cooking-pots must be used for him, etc.

LCO A professional hunter usually works alone, using bows and arrows,

(1) There is no information concerning the length of the farming-cycle.
(2) Childs, personal communication.
(3) See Hambly, *Bantu Studies*, 1934, and *Ovimbundu*, 1934, pp.140-5; Cushman, 1944, pp.113-20.

A professional hunter usually works alone, using bows and arrows, clubs, spears, and several kinds of trap.(1) Nets and poison are not used. Every hunter makes his own arrow-shafts and feathers; the points are made by a blacksmith. On the night before leaving for a hunt, the ukongo calls in his fellow hunters to share a ceremony which includes dancing and the re-anointing of the weapons with beer and palm-oil.

Communal hunts usually take place in June-July, in the middle of the dry season, when large tracts of land are covered with grass ten or more feet high. The day for the hunt is set by the village headman; spears and arrows are prepared and, when the word is given, a party of about 30 men and boys move off to the assigned area of tall grass. A ring is formed round about two square miles of land, the hunters standing just within sight of each other. The grass is trodden down, fires started, and the animals killed as they rush from the flames. Antelope of many kinds, snakes, foxes, wolves, hyenas, mice and rabbits and occasionally leopards are killed in this way.

FISHING

In the Kunene and some of the other larger rivers fish are large and plentiful, and men go on communal fishing expeditions, and return with fish to sell.(2) Men usually fish with bark lines, women use basket-traps(3) and poisons. Poison is used, usually in the dry season, when the rivers are shallow. Both men and women use nets, and sometimes a fish-weir or *olunja* may be employed; this has an opening in the middle, in the lower side of which is placed a basket-trap. At the coast and along the Kwanza river dug-out canoes, about 20-30 feet long, are sometimes used for fishing.(4)

DOMESTIC ANIMALS

The principal domestic animals are the cow (*onjindi*), ox (*ongombe*, which is also the generic name for cattle), bull (*onui*), sheep (*oneme*), goat (*ohombo*), pig (*ongulu*), dog (*ombua*), and chicken (*osanji*).(5) The only transport animal is the ox, used both for riding and for drawing carts.(6)

Cattle are a measure of wealth, but few families own large herds. Childs lists the domestic animals in a typical village of 196 inhabitants as: 9 head of cattle, 13 goats, 20 sheep, 100 pigs, and about 100 chickens. Cattle are used for paying fines and debts, for funeral feasts, and for marriage payments. Cows are not usually milked, and cattle are killed for food only when they are aged or injured, or occasionally during the June-July period of food shortage. Treated hides are used to cover stools, and for making pouches and corn-bags.(7)

The cattle herd obtains most of its food by grazing, but in the dry

(1) Some hunters have guns, but the use of gunpowder is restricted by the Portuguese.
(2) Cashmore, op.cit., p.143.
(3) See Cashmore, loc.cit. for a brief description of the basket-trap.
(4) Hambly, (2) 1934, p.145.
(5) Ibid., pp.152-6.
(6) Childs, personal communication. Cf. Hambly, op.cit., p.152.
(7) Hambly, op.cit., p.153.

233 The cattle herd obtains most of its food by grazing, but in the dry season the grass withers. Childs states[1] that "Herding has been a [604] function of the sister's son, and even now there is a reluctance on the part of the boys to herd for their fathers."

235 462 [844] Chickens are owned and looked after by both men and women, but other animals only by men. Boys may have small stock of their own, and a boy's economic independence most frequently begins with his owning a chicken.

231 Hambly states that goats are more common than any other animal, and that every family has one or more. These animals are not fed or watered, but are allowed to wander to find their own sustenance. Goats are not milked. Young males are castrated. The goat is frequently used in sacrifices. Sheep also are allowed to find their own food; the males are not castrated. Pigs are cared for comparatively carefully, receiving water and a daily supply of sweet potatoes and their leaves, together with some corn. Male pigs are castrated.[2]

APICULTURE[3]

[439] Beeswax was an important item of trade in the caravan days, and is still sold to Portuguese traders' stores, where it is massed into large rectangular cakes for export. Honey is eaten alone or with manioc, and [262] a fermented beer called *ochasa* is made by adding honey to corn-beer. [273] Fibre strainers are used for cleaning the wax, and large shallow baskets [252] are employed for drying the honey in the sun.

Large cylindrical hives, which are private property, are placed high in the trees. These are made by removing a cylinder of bark and lashing the halves together with strands of bark, forming a hive which has a diameter of one foot.

In Elende honey is removed from the hives during the months of August and December. One man ascends the tree in order to lower the hive with a long rope of bark or plaited fibre, while beneath the tree men are prepared to take the hive, which is opened over a smoky fire.

ARTS AND CRAFTS

326 782 *Smithing.* The profession of blacksmith or *ocivinda* is an important one, and, like hunting and divining, is sacred and is entered with special ritual. Often, but not always, these three professions are passed on by inheritance. For smithing two years' apprenticeship to a member of the profession is necessary, and is usually entered upon at the age of eighteen. At the end of this period the master examines his pupil, and makes tools for him, especially the heavy hammer or *onjundo* which is regarded as symbolic of his craft. For the inauguration ceremony the boy provides four chickens (2 male, 2 female), a dog, and a goat; the blood of these animals is sprinkled on his tools, and their flesh is eaten at a feast [553] attended by the villagers. Throughout the procedure the boy remains standing on the small anvil. Finally he is asked to choose his professional name; he then steps down from the anvil a qualified blacksmith.

(1) Childs, 1949, p.109. (2) Hambly, op.cit., p.154.
(3) Hambly, (4) 1934.

Formerly it was believed that a smith owed his skill to the help of the spirit of a person whom he had killed, and wooden effigies of this person were kept by the smith.(1)

The principal products of a blacksmith's forge are axe-heads, hoe blades,(2) tools for mat-making, arrowheads, knives, and brass bracelets. Iron, which is fairly plentiful, was formerly smelted over charcoal fires.(3) Today smiths use scrap iron.

Pottery

Pot-making is a part of women's work among the Ovimbundu. A wheel is not used. Clay is mixed with a silicate, usually gravel, rolled out in long ropes, and the pot built by the coiling process.(4) Pots are ornamented when wet by making deep incisions with a piece of gourd; they are then sun-dried, and fired in a kiln of dry grass. Pots are used as water-containers, as cooking vessels and as vessels for storing corn and beans, and, when made in a very large size, for brewing beer.(5)

No ritual attaches to pot-making, except at the opening of a new clay-pit, when, in the presence of both men and women from the village, the medicine-man sacrifices a chicken over the open pit.(6)

Weaving and Spinning

Looms have not been used among the Ovimbundu since they have been a people, although progenitors of the kingly families who came from the Bangala or Congo groups may have done weaving. Trade cloth has been known and used by the Ovimbundu for nearly 300 years.(7) Skins have been used in remote areas; Hambly when he mentions bark-cloth as being worn by the Ovimbundu is probably referring to the Ngangela. Spun cotton, however, is used for repairs, and there is a cotton plant in most gardens. Spinning is done always by men.(8)

Basketry

All girls learn to make baskets, although some become more proficient than others. Knowledge of basket-making implies also an understanding of dyeing, since coloured strands of grass are interwoven to make geometric patterns.(9) Baskets, and also basket-trays, are usually made by the coiling process.(10)

(1) Hambly, (2) 1934, pp.158-60. The ceremony was described from Njangelo village in Elende.
(2) See Cashmore, 1944, pp.140-1.
(3) For details of the blacksmith's forge and tools, see Hambly, op.cit., pp.160-1; Cashmore, 1944, pp.139, 140, 145-6.
(4) See Hambly, op.cit. Plates XXXIII and XXXIV, and Childs, 1949, Plate VIII.
(5) Hambly, op.cit., p.168; Cashmore, op.cit., pp.144-5.
(6) Hambly, op.cit., p.169.
(7) Childs, personal communication. See also Childs, 1949, p.171, note 1.
(8) See Hambly, p.177, and Cashmore, 1944, p.136.
(9) Red, yellow, black, and brown dyes are used. For a description of the process, see Hambly, op.cit., pp.170-1.
(10) See Hambly, op.cit., p.171, and Cashmore, op.cit., pp.141-2 for details of basket-making. Also for illustrations Hambly, op.cit. and Childs, 1949.

Mat-making

462 285 [412] The making of mats is a specialised craft for men. Generally elderly men are the mat-makers. Two tools are used, a borer and a needle, both products of the blacksmith's forge. Hambly[1] describes the making of reed sleeping mats, large mats used for partitions, and string bags. There are four distinct types of mats, each of which has its specialist.[2]

Leather-work

282 Leather pouches worn on a broad leather belt are part of the essential equipment of the hunter. The pouch is square, rectangular, or semi-cylindrical in shape, and may be decorated with cross-shaped patterns, or brass-headed nails used for decorative effect. Hide is also used for the seats of four-legged wooden stools. Hides are crudely dressed: they are soaked, the inner surface rubbed with sabes, the hair scraped away, and the hide pegged out.[3]

Wood-carving

323 [413] Wood-carving, which is men's work, includes the following specialisations: doors, windows and their frames; coffins; beds, tables and chairs; mortars, pestles, grinding-handles, and handles for various iron implements; stools, household utensils, carved images etc., drums and other musical instruments; canoes (dug-outs and coracles).[4] Illustrations are given by Hambly.[5]

TRADE

438 484 791 [482] Caravan trade is now confined to short journeys when corn, beans and beeswax are carried by men and women porters to the traders' stores. Formerly however it was an important feature of tribal life. Each caravan had its professional leader, and was accompanied by a diviner or medicine-man. Before a caravan started out, a ceremony was performed at which the principal performers were the village headman and the medicine-man. The head of the former headman was brought from its box, sewn in cowhide; blood from a sacrificed animal was sprinkled on the head, and invocation was made to the deceased by the village headman, asking for good fortune for the journey.[6]

438 434 Today the Ovimbundu exchange products among themselves both by barter and the use of Portuguese money,[7] but there are no large markets except in the towns.

[435] 438 The "trade-agreements" between the Ovimbundu kingdoms and between the Ovimbundu and other tribes have been mentioned above.[8] Accompanying these, regional industrial and commercial specialisations within Ovimbundu country developed. Thus in the middle of the last century

(1) Hambly, op.cit., pp.169-76.
(2) Childs, 1949, p.197.
(3) Hambly, op.cit., p.174.
(4) Childs, op.cit., p.120.
(5) Op.cit., Plates XIII to XVII.
(6) Hambly, op.cit., p.184.
(7) For details of Ovimbundu units of measurement see Hambly, op.cit., p.197.
(8) p.9.

time to the village of the paramount chief. These periods spent away from home continue into adolescence. Not only relatives, but also friends, blood-brothers and *vakuacisoko* (see below) exchange children in this way.

Later childhood

No definite time marks the transition from early to later childhood, but there are marked differences between the two stages. As soon as the child is physically able, he begins to assume a definite role in the community. Soon after a child gets his permanent teeth, a notch in the form of an inverted V is chipped between the two upper front incisors. Formerly the beginning of the period was marked for the boy by his first trip with a trading caravan; today a boy of this age may begin to work in the fields with his father, or begin to learn a trade, or be sent to school. A girl starts to learn field-work and housework.

Professions

A boy is expected to learn the profession or *ocipindako* in which his father or his mother's brother is expert, and after that, should he wish to learn some other side-line profession, he may apprentice himself. All children, both boys and girls, are expected to learn to cultivate, but that is not counted as a profession. The principal *ocipindako* (professions) listed by Childs are: for girls, basket-making, pottery-making, medical practice and divination; for boys, mat-making, wood-working, rope-making, thatching, fishing, apiculture, hunting, smithing, and medical practice and divination. The last three, as has been mentioned above, are "sacred" and entered under special conditions.

"Later childhood, then, is the period of technical training during which it is expected that a large amount of economic responsibility will be assumed. A child begins to own property even before this, and from the beginning of childhood will be accounted legally responsible for his actions. It is recognised, however, that he should not be set tasks beyond the experience or ability of his age and that the full responsibility of adulthood will come only with marriage."(1)

The coming of European commerce, industry, and government has created new types of employment for boys and men, some of which cause a prolonged absence from the village and a loosening or severing of kinship ties. There are no estimates of the number of persons employed by Europeans, or the average length of their absence from home.

ADOLESCENCE(2)

Childs found that the onset of puberty was late among the Ovimbundu, coming between fourteen and sixteen years for girls and between fifteen and seventeen years for boys. Soon after puberty young people generally stop sleeping in the parents' house. The girls congregate in kitchens and each boy builds himself a house, in which he will live through adolescence

(1) Childs, op.cit., p.130.
(2) Based on Childs, op.cit., pp.58-9 and 111-12.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

V. ECONOMIC LIFE

The words "economic life" are here used with a wide connotation including nature lore, food supply, trade, transport, and industries; all these are combined to form a foundation for every aspect of the social life of the tribe. 182

The truth of this is realized if one pays attention to the rites connected with occupations. For the hunter there is special training, ritual, and a peculiar mode of burial. Final ceremonies in the initiation of a young blacksmith are associated with sacred acts such as sacrifice of animals and the sprinkling of the tools with their blood. Even the simple occupation of pounding corn requires that the rock shall be dedicated to this purpose by sprinkling the blood of a chicken on the surface. Similarly, a clay pit has to be consecrated before the raw material may be taken for making pottery. A caravan journey is not merely a commercial undertaking; the accompanying medicine-man carries a wooden figure which he consults with regard to the route (Plate XXI, Fig. 5). 788 782 [787]

Division of labor according to sex is one of the most important principles involved in the economic life, more particularly in occupational groupings, which are strictly observed. Moreover, within any one activity, such as house-building, there are tasks for men only, while other parts of the work are performed exclusively by women or children. 462

The study of industries is of great importance when a comparison of Umbundu and adjacent cultures is being made. This is particularly true in the instance of wood-carving, an occupation yielding highly specialized products some of which are connected with religious belief and ritual. All artifacts are valuable as criteria of cultural contacts, though their reliability as evidence of trait diffusion naturally varies with their degree of complexity. Study of native industries in relation to European contacts illustrates a cultural process which may result in acceptance, rejection, or ingenious adaptation of new ideas. 322 177 [778]

That a study of the economic life of a tribe is not merely a recording of material processes and artifacts, is illustrated by observation of the treatment of cattle. This pastoral pursuit naturally falls under a heading "Domestic Animals," but the ideas associated with cattle, including funeral feasts, use of horns on graves, and the wrapping of the royal corpse in cowhide, lead directly into important matters of belief and ritual. 192 231

824 *Okalalulaka.* This tree has leaves which are used in treating a skin disease.
813 *Usandangulure.* This small tree, only three feet in height, gives straight twigs which are used in making arrow shafts.

FOOD SUPPLY

COLLECTING AND HUNTING

222 462 Collecting of natural products which serve as food substances is chiefly in the hands of women and children, though an exception has to be made in the instance of honey, which is gathered by men and boys.

Boys diligently search for nests, noting their location so as to be able to visit them again when the fledglings are large enough to serve as food. Large numbers of women and children may be seen 252 222 gathering caterpillars in gourds. The insides of the caterpillars are squeezed into boiling water to make soup.

When a cloud of locusts appears, as in 1925, the creatures are gathered. They are sometimes fried, or they may be boiled in water, dried, and preserved with salt in earthenware pots.

A number of miscellaneous items of the food supply were mentioned in connection with names of trees whose fruits are gathered.

223 [411] Boys engaged in food-gathering usually carry small bows and blunt wooden arrows (*ocilasi*). One type of bird arrow is fixed to the bowstring. The forward end of the arrow is split so that it may contain small stones that are ejected when the string is released. From the wild fig tree mucilage is obtained and this is boiled until it forms a thick paste which is smeared on the boughs of trees. [231] Some of the small birds captured in this way are eaten, others are kept in wicker cages made by children.

343 171 In all parts of Angola large cylindrical beehives may be seen fixed high in the trees (Plate XC, Fig. 2). Two types of hive have been noted in particular. In the Elende district a hive is made by opposing two half cylinders of wood each about three feet long, so forming a hive which has a diameter of one foot. The ends are covered, with the exception of a small round hole. The whole structure is bound round with grass which is kept in position by lashings of bark. In the neighborhood of Cassanga a difference in the structure of the hives was noticed. This type of hive is made from a cylinder of strong reddish bark, the edges of which are fastened together with stout wooden pegs. The dimensions are the same as for the hive used in Elende, but the hive of bark is uncovered.

231 In the Elende district honey of wild bees is removed from the hives in the months of August and December. One man ascends

[see pp. 138-140, category 116]

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

which are fixed on poles in front of the hunter's home during his lifetime (Plate XXXII, Figs. 1, 2). 764 224

There are at the funeral of a hunter special observances which will be mentioned under the heading of funeral rites.

FISHING

In the region of Elende there is fishing with both basket and line; a method of poisoning fish is also practised. Usually a male fishes with a bark line. Women catch fish by the poisoning method, and in addition to this they generally follow the procedure in which baskets are held or weighted in the stream. If the water flows swiftly men may take charge of the fishing operations. At times both men and women fish with nets. Husband and wife may not sleep together the night before fishing, as this is believed to make the male and female fish stay together at the bottom of the river. 226 462 [531]

The fishing line consists of tough green bark which is cut into strips whose length depends on the height of the river's bank. A hole is bored through the body of a grasshopper, a worm, or a grub taken from under the bark of a tree. Through this hole is passed a short stiff piece of grass about half an inch long, to which the line is attached. The fish is caught when the crosspiece of sharp grass becomes fast in its throat. [283]

When the fisher throws the line he sings: "O fish, come and take your good thing. Do not send the little fish to spoil the good thing. Better you come and take the good thing with all your strength."

In order to make fish poison the tuberous roots of a plant are taken and soaked in water until a scum rises to the top. The solid part of the poison is not given, because it would sink and the fish which ate it would remain at the bottom of the river. Therefore only the scum of this poisonous infusion is thrown in the water. The stupefied, gasping fish remain at the surface, whereupon they are seized by women who transfer them to gourds or baskets worn around their necks. Usually poison is used only in the dry season when the rivers are shallow.

Sometimes there is fishing by means of a weir (*olunja*) which has an opening in the middle. On the lower side of this gap a basket trap is placed.

There is no fishing by torchlight. At the coast, and along the river Kwanza I have seen heavy dugout canoes in use; these were about twenty to thirty feet long and hollowed from single trees (Plate LXXII, Figs. 1, 2). At Ambrizette I noted the use of a fishing [501]

226 spear eight feet long, the end of which consisted of ten sharp prongs
462 of palm stem (Plate LXXIII, Fig. 1).

[171] Near Cangamba in eastern Angola, fishing in the Kwando River occupied numerous men and women of the mixed tribes in the district, namely, Vachokue, Luchazi, and Babunda. Men paddled into midstream in small bark canoes from which fishing operations were directed. The fishermen carried small conical string nets, which were attached to stakes in such a way that the openings of the nets faced upstream. Vachokue women, working in pairs, dragged baskets against the current (Plate LXXXV, Figs. 1, 2).

AGRICULTURE AND COOKING

343 *Osila* is the Umbundu word for the granary which stands on
243 wooden supports (Plate XLIV, Fig. 1); this *osila* is for the restricted family, and there is one *osila* for every house. The Ovimbundu store their corn in bulk, but in the Esele country I noted that the cobs themselves were carefully packed. Each Ocimbundu girl cultivates a small patch of ground, the produce of which she is at liberty [432] to sell in order to buy brass ornaments, beads, and palm oil.

241 In addition to maize, barley, oats, and wheat, with here and there a little rye, are occasionally grown. There are three colors of beans, red, white, and black. There is no attempt to keep the varieties [651] separate, so they cross-fertilize freely. The Ovimbundu try to [438] cultivate a surplus of beans and maize which they use to pay their taxes to the Portuguese, likewise to sell at the stores of traders.

252 Corn is pounded on the rock which has been used for generations
512 after it has been consecrated by sprinkling the blood of a chicken. Pounding begins as early as five o'clock in the morning, before sunrise, and from that time to sunset the pounding-rock is in use. The [521] rock is evidently regarded as a meeting place for social intercourse; it is undoubtedly the center of village gossip so far as the women are concerned (Plate XXXVI, Fig. 2).

As corn alone is considered a poor food, it is sprinkled on boiling water to which beans are added. Cooking goes on from early morning to sunset over a slow fire. Children sometimes receive as their evening meal a thick plastic cake of mushed corn to which green leaves of a squash are added.

252 There are five kinds of manioc resembling one another in general appearance, but the Ovimbundu distinguish the plants, and reserve for each what they consider to be appropriate preparation. The method varies for sweet and bitter varieties of manioc.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

undoubtedly knew the apparatus and the method, but he appeared to have lost the dexterity which is necessary for a rapid moving of the hands from the bottom of the twirler to the top. There was consequently a long period of smoldering before the flame appeared.

Among the Vachokue a little wooden box of tinder, a piece of quartz, and an iron blade are carried for fire-making. From an Esele man a bag containing tinder and quartz was obtained.

The making of fire ceremonially in connection with ritual and sacrifice is described among the functions of the medicine-man, because the sacred and profane uses of fire are quite distinct.

Tobacco is a very important item of trade. The cultivation is a domestic industry followed usually by women but to some extent by men. In former days when the Ovimbundu traded extensively in Africa every man had a field of tobacco which he himself cultivated. At the present time each man is likely to have a mound of tobacco plants in the middle of a corn field (Plate XXIX, Fig. 1). Women do sometimes cultivate tobacco near their huts, but in this case the little plantation must be strongly fenced. Goats are numerous, and they eat the leaves of the tobacco plant with avidity.

Toward the end of September, when the rains begin, tobacco seed is sown on a patch of ground a yard square to raise seedlings which are planted out in October. A few flowers only are left to produce seed. As a further effort to improve the quality of the tobacco many of the lower leaves are removed. The cutting of leaves intended for use as tobacco is done by men in the months of February and March; women and children assist if the field is large.

After the midrib has been removed from each leaf, the leaves are suspended from the roof in a bundle. At the end of five days, when the leaves have turned brown, they are twisted into a long straight roll which is hung in the sun for three days. At intervals the roll is twisted in another direction. This gradually exposes all parts of the leaves, so that the drying is thorough. There are three methods of making up the rolls: *ombola* is an oval roll; *ongalo* is the round coil; *ocise* is the name given to tobacco which has been dried and twisted round a stick. Tobacco-pipes are varied in size and design (Plate XV, Figs. 1–3); those for men are larger than those used by women. A mixture of tobacco and hemp is smoked in a water-pipe made from the horn of a cow. Details of structure and ornament are given under "Wood-carving."

In order to make snuff a piece of dried tobacco is slowly baked near the fire on the end of a pointed stick which is turned frequently.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

412 fatigue is avoided by the method of holding and swinging so that the work of crushing is done by the weight of the implement.

412 252 Two less usual methods of pulverizing grain are by use of a long pestle, which is worked up and down in a heavy wooden mortar as shown by Plate LXXXIV, Fig. 1, in which Vachokue women are so employed, and the crushing of grain with a cylindrical stone which is rolled on a flat slab. This latter method I judge to be very old, for on a pre-Umbundu site encircled by stone walls I have seen flat slabs of stone and cylindrical rollers. Some of the flat slabs were worn extremely thin in the middle and a few were perforated by the friction.

It is noteworthy that there are rocks especially reserved for the pounding of grain with the wooden mallet. Such rocks are to be [782] found close to every village, and the dedication of a new rock for this purpose requires the killing of a chicken whose blood is sprinkled on the rock.

252 Work of this kind is begun before daybreak. From that time to [512] sunset the pounding of the wooden mallets, accompanied by the singsong of the women, marks the progress of the day's work. At intervals the pounded grain is sifted through the hands and spread out on a basket-work tray, which is shaken to separate the fine meal. The unbroken and partly broken grain is replaced on the rock for further pounding. A small brush of grass is used for bringing together the grain which is dispersed by the blows.

412 171 [863] The sole implement used in agriculture, which is entirely in the hands of women, is the hoe. Of this implement there are several variations according to locality. The Ovimbundu and others of Ngalangi employ the form illustrated in Plate XIII, Fig. 10. The long handles measuring 85 cm no doubt reduce fatigue by minimizing bending. Both hands are used, and, furthermore, the increased length of the handles must give a greater leverage. The smaller hoe used by Ovimbundu women of Elende has short handles only 51 cm (Plate XIII, Fig. 9), while that from the Esele country is distinguished by a broader blade and still shorter handles only 36 cm in length.

412 Included in the outfit of every Umbundu home is the heavy wooden floor beater. This implement, which is fashioned from a single piece of wood, consists of a narrow handle, round in cross section, and a flat portion for beating the moist, newly made, mud floor of the hut. The total length is about 83 cm.

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Not only the carpenter, but almost every Ocimbundu man possesses an implement which may be readily adapted as ax or adze (Plate XIII, Fig. 2). The wooden shaft, from 50 to 70 cm in length, terminates in a narrow grip at one end, while the other end expands into a large oval knob into which a circular hole is bored. The strong iron blade, one of the main products of the local forge, can be removed. If the round tang of the blade is inserted so that the cutting edge is in the same plane as the shaft, the implement is an ax. On the contrary, insertion so that the cutting edge is at right angles to the shaft converts the implement into an adze. When placed over the shoulder this implement is used for carrying utensils in a fiber bag (Plate XXVIII, Fig. 1).

Gourds are of three main kinds, which may be found growing on the ground or resting on the roofs of houses at the ends of the climbing stems that bear them. *Ombenge* is a gourd which is narrow in the middle. It is often converted into a dipper for ladling liquids. The narrow neck is the handle, while a round hole is cut in the larger part so that the dipper can be filled with liquid. *Onganja* is round, or perhaps oval in form. There is a size used as a measure of capacity. *Onganja* can be used as a ladle by fixing it at the end of a stick. *Olukembo* has a round body and a narrow hook-shaped neck; like the gourd *ombenge*, it is used as a ladle.

Gourds are elaborately decorated with incised and burned designs (Plate XII, Figs. 1–6). Usually these patterns are geometrical, but human figures and animals are sometimes included. Decorated gourds from Bailundu, used for containing beer at a wedding, are among the best examples of their kind (Plate XII, Fig. 6).' The owner of a decorated gourd takes great pains to repair a crack with rattan, which is threaded through holes bored in the edges of the fracture. A large gourd is sometimes carried in a native-made net of vegetable fiber.

POTTERY

A large and varied collection of pottery has been acquired from the Ovimbundu, the Vachokue, and the Vasele. The shapes and styles are best indicated by the illustrations in Plate XIV, Figs. 1–5.

Among the Ovimbundu, only women make pots, which are inferior in workmanship to those of the Vachokue and the Vasele. At Elende, among the Ovimbundu, I was surprised to find a man making pottery. Further inquiry showed that he had learned his craft when young in the Vachokue country of eastern Angola. This man, whose work was not copied at all by Ovimbundu women, was regarded as a specialist whose products were in great demand.

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When the clay was being mixed an old pot was broken and pulverized so that some of the powder might be added to the new pot. There may be the underlying idea of continuity in the potter's art. The potters said, *Sanga yi pita* ("Lest it leak"). There may be no purpose other than the imparting of stability to the new clay.

I was unable to find any trace of ritual except with reference to the opening of a new clay pit. When a pit is first opened both men and women attend. The head of a chicken is twisted off by a medicine-man, then the bird is held over the pit by either a man or a woman. There is no law or ceremony to determine who shall take the first clay from the pit. The art of making pots is in the hands of female specialists so far as the Ovimbundu are concerned. Observation makes clear that women will go for a long distance to obtain clay from the pit which has been opened in a ceremonial manner. On their way to such a pit they pass clay which would serve their purpose well, but they do not use it. Children sometimes amuse themselves by making animals of clay.

The pottery of the Ovimbundu includes cooking vessels of many sizes, water containers, and very large pots for brewing beer (*olombia vi okukela*).

MATS AND BASKETS

This occupation illustrates division of labor on a sex basis. Baskets are made by women, while mat-making is an occupation for males. As with other trades there is specialization. The majority of women are able to make baskets though the skill of individuals varies. All women who have a knowledge of basketry understand the manufacture of dyes. Only a few men make mats; my informant thought that perhaps one man in ten would have the necessary skill. Such specialization is continued into other occupations; for example, only a few men spin cotton thread, while the majority of people buy pottery from expert female potters.

The mat-maker, generally an elderly male, uses two tools, a borer and a needle, both products of the native forge. The borer (*utomo*) for piercing the reeds, consists of a long thin blade in a wooden grip. The needle (*osinja*) is threaded with bark fiber and passed through the holes made by the *utomo*. The bark thread is *ombanja* (plural *olombanja*).

The sleeping mat (*esisa*) is made of reeds which are gathered in the early morning by a man who wets and binds his material into bundles, each of which contains reeds of the same length. The length of the reeds varies, of course, with the size of mat he intends to make.

285 The name *esisa* is given to the raw material as well as to the mat. The worker begins by laying out the reeds on the ground, side by side; then the slender tool *utomo* is passed through the reeds near their ends. This position is made permanent by sewing, and the process is repeated at intervals along the length of the reeds (Plate XLII, Figs. 1, 2).

Evinda is a large mat, about 120 cm long and 20 cm wide, while each strip of coarse elephant grass is about 3 cm wide. Ability to make the rush mat (*esisa*) is fairly common, but skill in making *evinda* is less usual. The mat *evinda* has several uses; it may be stretched on the floor or bed as a sleeping mat, or possibly it is rolled so that the ends can be fastened together; so treated it forms a cylinder which may be filled with grain when stood upright on the ground. A number of these mats is sometimes used to form a temporary storage place or shelter. The technique is of the twilled variety in which each weft passes over and under two warps.

Ocala is a coarse mat made from long stalks which are called "elephant grass" by the Boers; the agricultural term is "Napier's fodder." The long rods are white and glazed, so forming an artistic contrast to the crossbinding, which is of black bark. The technique is known as check, a term used to describe a structure in which warp and weft pass over and under each other singly.

The large mat (*ocikanga*) which is of soft texture shows neatly woven, diamond-shaped patterns of dark brown grass. The technique of this mat is of the twilled variety in which each weft passes over and then under two warps.

283 String bags, which are used for suspending gourds or hanging them over the shoulder, are made by men only. The root *ombundi*, mentioned in connection with brewing beer, is used for making string bags. Two fibers that have been teased out from the root are rolled tightly together by rubbing them between the palm and the thigh.
[462] Strong rope is sometimes made by plaiting coarse grass; this occupation is in the hands of males.

386 In basket-making the preparation of dyes is of great importance
[531] because colored strands of grass are inwoven to make named geometrical patterns (Plates IX; X). The Umbundu expression for dyeing is *oku lisa olosovo*.

Red coloring is produced by taking leaves of a plant named *evava*
[515] and cooking them in water along with the bark of the tree *ukondo*. *Ukondo* is the "tooth brush" tree because small pieces of its wood are chewed and used for cleaning the teeth. After the grass has

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbunda

In addition to pouches, hide is used by the Ovimbundu for the seats of four-legged wooden stools. Before stretching the hide over the wooden frame the edge of the leather is cut into strips which are interlaced on the under side of the stool (Plate XVIII, Fig. 1). There are few evidences of the hide having been dressed; usually the hair is attached. The Ovimbundu understand the dressing of hides in a crude way. The hide is soaked, after which the inner surface is rubbed with ashes. The hair is scraped away and the hide is tightly pegged out. Hide was formerly used for covering wooden boxes in which a king carried his powder and possessions to war. Scraped hide is used to form the tympanum in tubular wooden drums.

In only one part of Angola, notably in the south among the Vakuanyama, is leather used as clothing. Women wear pleated skirts of hide and several broad leather belts, while the men have small leather aprons in front and behind. Men only are the leather workers. The hide is soaked and trampled under foot for many hours in order to soften it and make it pliable; the hair is not removed. Before leather clothing is worn it is thickly greased with a mixture of fat and red powder from *tukula* wood (Plates LXV, Figs. 1–3; LXVII, Fig. 1).

SPINNING AND WEAVING

My interpreter Ngonga remembers the use of a heavy upright loom about twenty years ago, but this loom is not used at the present time among the Ovimbundu. The Ovimbundu have been in contact with Europeans for three centuries. This has not been a close and permanent contact, but it has been sufficient to account for the disappearance of a one-time essential art. There are in Elende some very fine raffia palm trees, but no use is made of the leaf fiber for manufacturing clothes. Bark cloth is not made by the Ovimbundu of Elende, but I have seen the Vangangella and Ovimbundu of Ngalangi engaged in stripping, beating, and preparing bark for use as clothing, which is formed of one piece wound round the body. The bark cloth is not dyed or decorated with patterns.

Frequently at Elende men are seen engaged in spinning cotton which is used for repairs, and not for fabricating garments. The cotton is obtained from a shrub which has reddish leaves and yellow flowers. The cotton may be seen protruding from the calyx in the months of June and July. The man who is winding holds high in his left hand a slender stick which is wrapped for a length of two feet with fluffy cotton. All work of pressing and twisting the cotton into a thread is done by the thumb and index finger of the right hand.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

283 In the beginning a thread from the fluffy mass on the stick is fastened to a corncob or to a potato, the weight of which keeps the thread taut (Plate XXXVI, Fig. 1).

[462] I have never seen a woman spinning and am informed that in former days the working of the loom was a task for men only.

463 In presenting facts bearing on the economic life of the Ovimbundu
791 attention has been paid to the importance of ritual, specialization in industry, and division of labor on a sex basis. Clearly, the economic life is one of the fundamentals of social structure, while at many points it is a field in which the magician works.

132 Topography and climate have fixed certain conditions which, so
241 far as the Benguela Highlands are concerned, favor agriculture on an extensive scale, also the keeping of cattle. In the Benguela Highlands a moderate temperature, combined with sufficient rainfall, has produced a type of vegetation which provides timbers serviceable to the craftsman, together with bush that affords shelter for game.

128 The bearing of these economic facts on the probable origins of traits, and their assembly to form the tribal life of the Ovimbundu, is reserved for discussion in chapters dealing with culture contacts and cultural processes. In chapters X–XII the factual material presented here under "Economic Life" is correlated with what is known of similar activities in cultures surrounding that of the Ovimbundu.

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(Plate XLV, Fig. 2). The house of bows for holding sacred relics will be described in connection with religion (Plate XLVI, Fig. 1).

In former days there used to be a hard mud floor for dancing, centrally placed in the village.

In the center of the village is the communal house where all men, and boys over four years of age, gather to eat their food, which is sent by the women. This *onjango* is the place of assembly for discussion of village affairs. A house of this kind at Bailundu is circular in form with a diameter of seventeen feet (Plate XLVIII, Fig. 1). In the middle of the *onjango* are stones forming a fireplace. In another such house there were jawbones of oxen. These were suspended from the walls as tokens of the payment of fines. There is no communal house for females. In some villages there is a common kraal for cattle.

The king's compound usually contains:

(1) The king's house, which invariably has a separate sleeping room.

(2) A house and kitchen for each of his wives.

(3) A tomb for the burial of kings and their wives.

(4) The house of bows for staffs, bows, mats, and tobacco-pipes of dead chiefs.

(5) A house of meditation for the king (Plate LXXXIX, Fig. 1).

(6) Pens for pigs and chickens.

The guest houses (Plate XLVIII, Fig. 2) that I have seen were not in the king's compound. Granaries, which are conspicuous in every village, have been mentioned in connection with food supply (Plate XLIV, Fig. 1). Each house has its own granary. I have noticed garbage pits containing corn husks and refuse from sweet potatoes, but there is as a rule no organized scheme for disposing of refuse; dogs and pigs are the scavengers. There is no particular place for defecation; people use the bush.

Every man has a knowledge of house-building. Women do not actually build, but, along with the children, they pour water into the clay pit and carry clay to the men who are plastering the walls. Ngonga says, "People would be surprised to see a woman building a house. They would call her a he-woman." Men help one another in house-building by giving reciprocal service for which there is a gift of food and beer.

A deep rectangular clay pit is made as close to the house as possible, and the children thoroughly enjoy puddling the clay with their

VII. EDUCATION

Industrial Training and Division of Labor

871 Usually there is no formality connected with the industrial and occupational training of Ovimbundu children. The section dealing with play shows that boys and girls learn by spontaneous imitation of their elders.

874 There are, however, exceptions to this general truth. Special rites connected with the training and inauguration of blacksmiths and hunters have been described. The training of medicine-men and women will be dealt with in chapter IX, "Religion."

462 In describing economic life in chapter V, division of labor on a 463 sex basis; also specialization in industry because of peculiar tastes and aptitudes, were noted. There is clearly a twofold division in industrial life. In the first place sex determines occupation, and within this primary grouping there is a secondary grouping depending [467] on personal preference and individual ability. I have found no instance of exclusive hereditary right to any occupation or industry.

462 The net result of the Umbundu system of division of labor is indicated by the following summary:

[342] When building houses, men dig the rectangular trench, cut the poles for the framework, lash the crosspieces, cut grass and lay the thatch, then place clay over the wattle walls. Women carry water for mixing the clay and convey the moist clay to the plasterers. [224] Children puddle the clay with their feet. Males are hunters both professional and general. During a communal hunt women and children assist in driving game, which is frightened by the firing of [857] grass. Boys organize games in which they imitate these activities. [226] Men fish with a line and bait, whereas women use baskets and [231] narcotic poison. Men and boys take care of cattle and have charge of dogs. Women and girls give what slight attention is afforded to other domestic animals. Male specialists castrate bulls and goats.

[241] During agricultural operations men clear the ground and burn the bush. Women carry on hoe cultivation without assistance from [482] men. Men are the chief carriers in caravans, but women and children may sometimes be seen carrying loads. They march in line with the men but have smaller burdens. Males are employed in blacksmith's work, wood-carving, making weapons and tools, weaving mats, dressing hides, spinning cotton, and formerly in weaving on an upright loom. Men are exclusively the makers of

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Men are exclusively the makers of 462
musical instruments, and males are the musicians. Men are the [534]
only persons engaged in warfare and administration, and the *onjango* or council house is used exclusively by males. Men follow the [756]
occupation of medicine-man, in which there is considerable specialization. Female practitioners deal with pregnancy and women's ailments. In addition to the tasks for women mentioned above, the following are staple occupations: collecting firewood, drawing water, caring for infants, making pottery, weaving baskets, dancing, and singing. Young girls share these activities with older women.

The foregoing categories explain division on the grounds of sex. 463
Degrees of specialization are not so easy to formulate, but in general a man follows some one occupation, for example wood-carving. Then within this occupation there is specialization in the making of drums, domestic utensils, or figurines.

Almost any woman could make pottery or baskets, but the difference in skill leads naturally to concentration in the hands of [432]
expert potters and basket-weavers respectively. These sell their wares to those who either do not make such articles or are inept at the process.

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT, MANNERS, AND SALUTATIONS

The parents of a child, also his maternal uncle, assume respon- 861
sibility for training in the precepts and standards given here. The 867
maternal uncle, who is the mother's oldest brother, is particularly interested because he has to pay fines should his sister's children commit thefts. The evidence indicates that the home and restricted family have formative influences over the conduct of children.

Children are beaten if they tell lies, answer old people rudely, or steal food. Ngonga says that his "stealing hand" was once placed in the hot leaves of the cooking pot. If a child steals an egg which is cooking, the hot egg is held between the culprit's hands.

One cannot fail to notice the quiet and unobtrusive way in which children sit in the presence of their elders both in the home and in [858]
the council house. Children do not speak when their elders are in conversation, unless addressed.

A child, likewise an adult, receives a gift with both hands. The [576]
implied idea is that reception with one hand is a depreciation of the gift. If a child holds out one hand, the hand is slapped. When receiving, an Ocimbundu says "*kuku*," literally grandfather or elder. Colloquially the word is used to mean greeting, "I thank you," or "I beg your pardon."

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way. Such instances as these came to light when my primary intention was a study of the use of wooden arrows for killing birds.

An inquiry about the names of trees and the use of timbers led to the topic of making and using wooden figures for magical purposes. Woodcraft, wood-carving, and religion are associated.

There is no fallacy so great as that of supposing that data may be collected and retained in mutually exclusive divisions. For example, a study of proverbs leads to native ideas concerning government, succession to office, and standards of conduct. The Ovimbundu say, "A turtle cannot climb on a tree stump, some one has to place it there." What is the meaning of this proverb? There are some men who occupy positions for which they have no ability; such men have been chosen through influence. The normal successor to chieftainship and kingship is the eldest son of the deceased man's principal wife, but if this rightful successor is stupid, some other son will be chosen. Yet the foolish youth may have friends who see their own advantage in having a weak ruler; they therefore combine to place him in office. The turtle has been placed on the tree stump, since it could not climb there.

In addition, folklore shows projection of the mentality of human beings into the lives of animals. Bird cries, with their supposed calls and answers, indicate that the birds have their family relationships involving strife, love, jealousy, and generosity. To the Ovimbundu, birds are a feathered human community.

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Proverbs reveal a philosophy which is expressed by the German *Weltanschauung*. "If you are full of food, do not climb on a leopard's back; the leopard may be hungry." This means that one should not be foolishly exalted through good fortune. "You cannot tie a buck's head in a cloth; the horns will stick out," expresses the idea that crime cannot be concealed. "Hot water does not burn a house, and cold water does not make mush," is a sarcastic reply to one who boasts of things he cannot do. A riddle may express a philosophical train of thought. "What is it that lives while it dies and dies while it lives?" This is the log of wood the end of which is from time to time pushed farther into the fire. Like a human life, the log is being slowly consumed while yet living. Such examples as these call attention to a welding of thought, language, nature lore, and ideas that regulate conduct.

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In considering food supply and occupations, division of labor on a sex basis is clear. Social sanctions have determined the appro-

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priateness of certain tasks for males and females respectively, and individuals reflect these attitudes in their ideas and conduct.

My interpreter and others who were questioned laughed at the idea that men and women might interchange their occupations in the course of house-building. A woman collects wood for fuel, but not for house-building. Structural work is in the hands of men who dig the foundations, erect the poles, tie the crosspieces and add the roof. Women carry water for mixing the clay which is puddled by children; men, women, and children apply wet clay to the wattle walls. "Suppose a man should carry water?" I asked. "He would be laughed at and people would say that he was a he-woman," came the ready answer.

Women invariably make pottery among the Ovimbundu, but this is not always so in Negro tribes. Women of the Ovimbundu are likewise basket-makers, but they do not make mats, for this occupation is considered suitable for men only. Only women pound corn; before daybreak the heavy wooden pestles are at work and until sunset the rocks reserved for this operation are the centers of female activity, which includes singing and gossip. Only men herd cattle and only males are hunters. Women and children are the collectors of wild fruits and caterpillars, but only men take honey from the hives.

Agriculture and the preparation of food are entirely in the hands of the women. Men never eat with women; the latter have to carry the prepared food to the men's communal house in the middle of the village. Both men and women catch fish, but there are methods appropriate for each sex. There is a sex-division of labor without any implication of the inferiority of women.

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Occupations cannot be studied merely in a formal way, for, although the tasks are performed every day, a ceremonial element is involved. A clay pit is consecrated by the killing of a fowl; so also is the rock which is used as a base for pounding grain. The young blacksmith is initiated after two years of apprenticeship. On this occasion a dog is killed with the hammer which the master made for his pupil and the blood of the sacrificed animal is sprinkled on the tools. The remainder of the ritual and belief has been described in connection with occupations of the Ovimbundu. Study of the blacksmith's work was begun as research in technology; but failure to purchase the large hammer, even for a tempting sum, led to the discovery of considerable ritual.

Abstention from sexual relationships is enjoined on men and women who are going fishing. That copulation would induce the

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824 825 semblance for a time caused confusion in my mind, were well known to be distinct; though occasionally a prolonged and serious argument would arise among the old men respecting the correct Umbundu names for two similar snakes.

The cries of birds are interpreted in terms of human conversation: thus the female hornbill says to her mate, "I'm going; I'm going; I'm going to our village;" to which the male replies, "Don't go. The rain has come; let us plant." Another bird says, "Where will the guests stay? where? where? where?" This is an intimation that strangers will visit the village. All animals play a part in folk stories: human beings when introduced are usually of secondary importance.

Nature lore is, of course, fundamental to industries, since the artisans must know the best timbers for particular purposes. Thus certain woods yield the best charcoal for a blacksmith's forge; other woods are essential for house building because the timbers resist attacks of termites; again certain trees yield bark for making rope; while other woods are used for carving animals and household utensils.

● [462] I am not sure of the extent to which women participate in nature lore; but certainly their knowledge cannot equal that of the men, since women are concerned chiefly with agriculture, domestic work, care of children, and collection of firewood. Yet women and little children are collectors. I have seem many of them together gathering caterpillars which are to be made into soup. Women know the plants that will yield dyes for basketry, and from women some of the bird calls were obtained. The conversation of men bears on their occupations and the nature lore fundamental to these; therefore women must learn, though perhaps only by unconscious absorption.

224 In connection with a study of food supply the occupation of hunting comes most closely to the general nature lore mentioned above. Here a distinction should be made between hunting as a general occupation for males, and hunting by a professional who gives his life to the work. The only occasion on which women and children assist hunters is during a communal hunt, when all the inhabitants of a village fire the dry grass and aid in the capture of game by shouting and driving the frightened animals.

A professional hunter is usually called ukongo, more rarely onyanga. The occupation is not hereditary. A boy has to serve two years with a professional hunter before his initiation. The principal guests at the initiation feast are professional hunters, who alone may dance, though a miscellaneous company is present. The boy who seeks initiation is required to keep quite still until he feels the "spirit on his head;" then he distributes meat to the people present. The meat used at the feast is that of antelope shot by

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595 562 of the village. The meals are brought there by those wives who are at the time cohabiting with their husbands. But an exception is made in case of menstruation, for a woman is not allowed to cook or handle food during her period. At such times the preparation and transfer of food is carried out by another wife, and of course the time comes when such a service can be 241 requited. I found no survival of agricultural rites such as offering first fruits or other similar ceremony.

In some tribes of Sudanic and Bantu Negroes agricultural rites are important in relation to sowing and harvest, since land is in the first place the property of dead ancestors, but so far as my inquiries go such rites are not now known to the Ovimbundu. Maize may be pounded only on rocks that have been consecrated by the medicine-man: he kills a chicken and sprinkles [462 the surface of the rock with its blood. Only women may pound corn, and a 838] youth who persisted in dressing as a woman and pounding on the rocks was beaten by his relatives. This information gave a clue to homosexual practices, but the information obtained was meager.

231 In connection with the care of domestic animals many tempting digressions present themselves, but I am concerned only with beliefs, ritual, and division of labor. Chickens are of ritual importance since they provide the least expensive sacrifice, and in connection with industries the piacular use of chickens will presently be mentioned. For sacrificial purposes a goat is preferred to a sheep since it makes more noise; but the reason for this is not clear, though making a surmise I would say that the noise better appeases ancestral spirits to whom most sacrifices are made. Pigs are kept, but I did not hear of them being used for sacrifice. The animals so far mentioned have little or no attention. Goats fend entirely for themselves; so also do sheep. Chickens receive maize from women and children, who also gather the eggs. Pigs receive maize and mush from cooking pots or that discarded in making beer, but they depend largely on foraging in refuse pits.

The castration of pigs and bulls is the work of a male specialist who receives a fee of four yards of cloth for operating on the latter animal, but only a small gift of tobacco or similar recognition for castrating a pig.

The Ovimbundu have acquired cattle of the long-horned Damara breed, and in connection with the care of these some important points of ritual and division of labor should be recorded. The herding of cattle is [462 exclusively the work of males, and I am not aware that women have any 234 tasks connected with cattle. Only in recent times have some male owners of cattle begun to milk the cows. This they do somewhat stealthily, deceiving the cow from time to time by allowing the calf to suck for a few moments. If asked why milk is not used, the owners say that calves deprived of suck-

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sided permanently in the wooden figure. This ritual murder is now impossible, but the wooden figures are still used in the way described. 326 778

Women are never engaged in blacksmiths' work; neither are they employed as wood carvers. Among men wood carving is a specialized occupation, and within the craft itself are men who deal solely with one branch of the work. Thus in a village perhaps only one man is capable of making a drum, while another carves life-like wooden figures of animals, and a third specializes in the fabrication of household implements. [462] 532

Among the Ovimbundu women are the only potters, but I found just one exception in the case of a man who said that he learned the potter's craft in eastern Angola among the Vachokue. No ritual is connected with the making of pottery, but I observed that women always frequented one pit for their clay and in doing so passed better clay which was more accessible. I learned that a clay pit has to be consecrated by a medicine-man who kills a chicken and sprinkles the blood in the pit. All women at some time learn the arts of pottery making and basketry, but by the process of selection the industries become concentrated in the hands of the most skillful. 462 323 [782]

Only women make baskets; a craft in which they are skilled, especially in the gathering of plants and the extraction of dyes of soft shades. Such dyes have considerable endurance even though exposed to bright sunlight. Imported dyes are now competing with indigenous products, but the latter are still preferred in most localities. One might expect that women who are skilled in basket making would be expert weavers of mats, but this is not so. Mat making is in the hands of men who are skilled specialists, and within the mat making industry are at least three principal divisions of the craft, one for each type of mat. 462 285

Men spin cotton for mending clothes, but I have not seen women so engaged. I did not see any looms in use in Angola, but they survived up to a few years ago, and in the youth of my interpreter, who was about thirty years of age, looms worked by men were plentiful. 283 462 286

House building shows a division of labor according to age and sex. Men are responsible for cutting the poles, digging the trench in which these uprights are set, and binding the cross-pieces with bark. Men are likewise responsible for plastering the walls and laying the thatch. Women carry water to the clay pit and transport the puddled clay to the men who are plastering the walls. Children, some of them so young that they have to be rescued from a swampy grave, delight in puddling the clay with their feet. The rectangular pit is always as near the house as possible in order to minimize the labor of transport. I suggested that some of the tasks should 462 331

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462 be reversed and asked whether men could not carry the water. I was told
331 that such a man would be laughed at and called a "he-woman." Yet division of labor does not imply sex inferiority, and ridicule would arise from incongruity.

MEDICINE-MEN

759 The training of a medicine-man (ocimbanda) and a medicine-woman
791 (chambula) involves few formalities, but this class of work requires that a novice shall have "spirit in the head." When visited by a sick boy the medicine-man shakes his divination basket and if a certain combination of objects appears, he says, "Your father was ocimbanda and his spirit wants you." The boy who is thus adopted has to accompany the medicine-man, his master, carrying apparatus and standing near to play a small friction drum while the master is shaking his divination basket.

Specialization among medicine-men is carried to great degree of refinement, especially among those practitioners who profess therapeutic knowledge. I employed three medicine-men to collect plants, of which they appeared to have an expert knowledge. Umbundu names were given and the curative properties of each plant were explained with enthusiasm and evident conviction. The men were undoubtedly sincere in their own beliefs. A specialist who can cure blood in the urine, and another who is said to treat dizziness successfully, are greatly respected. The rainmaker is ocimbanda opulia, "the medicine-man of the rain," who dances while flourishing a cow-tail switch, and blowing a shrill whistle intermittently.

Ocimbanda is of course distinguished from ongange, since the former is concerned with socially beneficent tasks such as those mentioned, while
[759] the latter may cause sickness, impotence, and sterility. In earlier days the task of finding sorcerers (ongange) by use of the poison ordeal was that of an ocimbanda. Medicine-women are called in to take care of difficult cases of childbirth, and I have seen a medicine-woman painting the face of a pregnant woman, who thereafter observed certain taboos.

Space will not permit enumeration of the contents of a divination basket and the significance attached to each item; neither can I give details of ceremonies for curing the sick or bringing a thief back to the village, but the foregoing notes suffice to show that the craft is specialized and still important. A medicine-man ceremonially washes a king or chief on rare occasions. He makes new fire by twirling; though flint and steel, also
[782] matches, are known. When a new village is founded a medicine-man stirs the blood of sacrificed animals with the claws of a chicken; then he sprinkles this blood on each new house.

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could send food.' 'Perhaps your mother is dead, and she has to think of your father.' A man should not cook for himself in a village, by a rule of convention which has no sanction attached, although he may do so when away working.

Clearing fields, house-building, and thatching are men's work, as are brick-making, fishing, hunting, mat-making, sewing, and woodwork. Beer-brewing, cooking, maize-pounding, and water and firewood gathering are women's work. Men and women can work together in most forms of agriculture, sowing, hoeing, harvesting, feeding small stock and treating tobacco. The division of labour is based on ideas of what is natural and fitting, not on any sanctions, mystical or otherwise. Nor is the division always strictly observed. A man may fetch water if his wife is ill, or simply away visiting relatives, and I have seen an adolescent boy pounding out maize on a pounding-block.

A man should look after his sick wife. There is a song which is sung about the married couples of the village, each being named in turn, which tells how the husband went to the post and his wife climbed a tree to get some fruit down. She fell down and hurt herself and then wailed because there was nobody to look after her. A woman who is ill for some time will return to her kin to get better.

The husband does not attend his wife's funeral, but washes himself all over, and then has to lie down asleep, or as if sleeping, during the funeral. Grains of maize and other crops may be, but are not always, even at pagan funerals, thrown over a woman's coffin as it is taken to the cemetery. A man should leave his old home when his wife dies, although this rule is neglected nowadays, certainly by the owners of brick houses. After a year or two, a widower should *ola nenge*, pile up stones on his wife's grave, a duty which has behind it a vague mystical sanction of illness. The widow of a hunter should be buried beside her husband even though after his death she has married again.[1]

A widow may marry again about six months after the funeral. The exception to this is the *inakala*, the chief's main wife. Formerly, it was permitted for a widow to marry her husband's

[1] A case of this occurred during my stay.